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THE INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS CENTER--WHOSE EMPIRE.

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DESCRIPTORS- *MEDIA SPECIALISTS, *INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS CENTERS, PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL, NONPROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL, ORGANIZATION, SCHOOLS, HIGHER EDUCATION, SCHOOL SYSTEMS,

GROWTH OF NEW MEDIA PROGRAMS HAS CAUSED A QUESTION AS TO WHETHER THEY BELONG IN THE DOMAIN OF THE LIBRARIAN OR OF THE AUDIOVISUAL SPECIALIST. ONE SOLUTION IS TO COMBINE ALL MEDIA IN A SINGLE INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS CENTER FROM WHICH TEACHERS AND STUDENTS MAY PROCURE THE MEDIA NEEDED FOR LARGE GROUP PRESENTATION, SMALL GROUP INTERACTION, OR INDIVIDUAL STUDY. TO PROVIDE NECESSARY SERVICES, THREE ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED--(1) A SOFTWARE OR MEDIA LIBRARY THAT INCLUDES BOOKS, FILMS, SLIDES, AND RECORDINGS NEEDED FOR PRESENTATIONS OR INDIVIDUAL STUDY, (2) A HARDWARE OR EQUIPMENT SHOP FOR ACQUIRING, STORING, SERVICING, AND ISSUING EQUIPMENT, AND (3) A PRODUCTION CENTER FOR PREPARATION OF RECORDINGS, FILMS, SLIDES, TRANSPARENCIES, GRAPHICS, BOOKLETS, AND HANDOUT SHEETS. ALTHOUGH MOST OF THIS WORK CAN BE DONE BY NONPROFESSIONAL, TECHNICAL PERSONNEL, THERE IS NEED FOR A PRESENTATION SPECIALIST AND FOR A SPECIALIST IN INDIVIDUAL LEARNING. THESE SPECIALISTS, PLUS TECHNICIANS AND SECRETARIAL HELP, WOULD WORK ON A TEAM DIRECTLY WITH THE TEACHERS. THEY WOULD PROBABLY REPLACE THE PRESENT LIBRARIAN AND AUDIOVISUAL SPECIALIST. THIS ARTICLE IS PUBLISHED IN "AUDIOVISUAL INSTRUCTION," VOLUME 12, NUMBER 2, FEBRUARY 1967. (WO)

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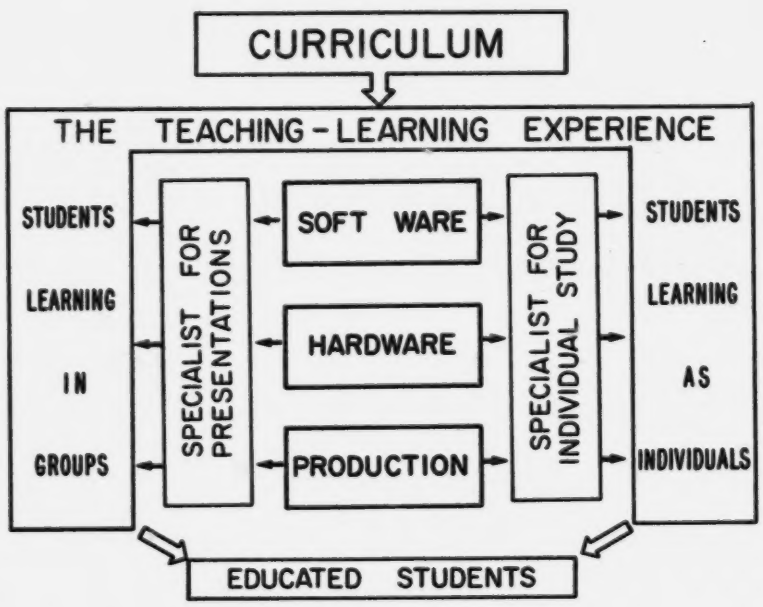
The Instructional Materials Center:

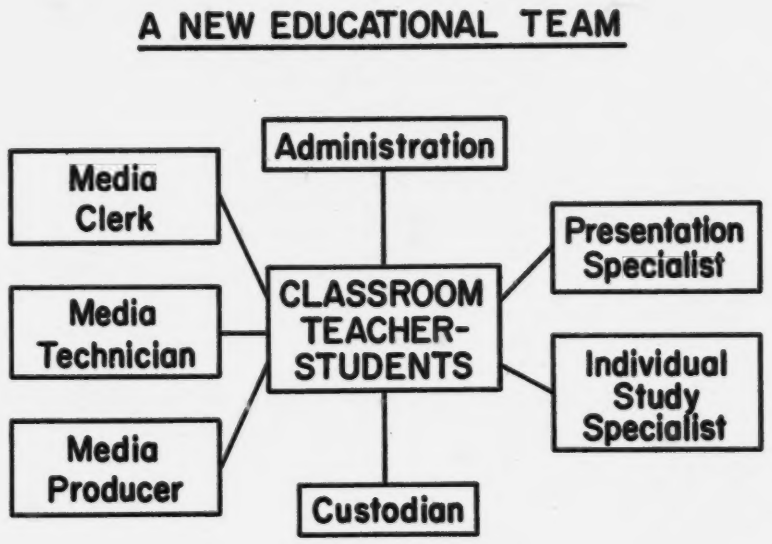
THERE is no doubt in any modern educator's mind that the wide and good use of all kinds of print and nonprint media is needed if teachers are to teach and students are to learn effectively and efficiently in our schools. There was a time when printed and audiovisual materials were optional and on the fringes of the teachers' central concern. Library and audiovisual specialists established little empires that made little difference to any one, least of all the students. But times have changed. Books, periodicals, films, transparencies, recordings and programs—the "software" of education—are now recognized as essential to education. So, too, are the equipment and spaces —"hardware"—necessary to handle and use them. The new status of educational software and hardware is due to research, experimentation, evaluation, and most of all, to federal support for their acquisition and use.

The media program, or more commonly programs, have now grown to the point where they are worth fighting for, and the outcome of the battle does make a difference. The two protagonists are the audiovisual person and the librarian. Who shall be the person in charge of the wealth of media resources now being purchased and about to be purchased for education?

It is easy for the established and traditional audiovisual person and librarian to look at the new horn of plenty and make plans to include all of the new media in his own area. There may be a battle, and it may hurt everyone.

An attractive solution is to combine all books and nonbook media into a single instructional materials center (IMC) presided over by a general media person





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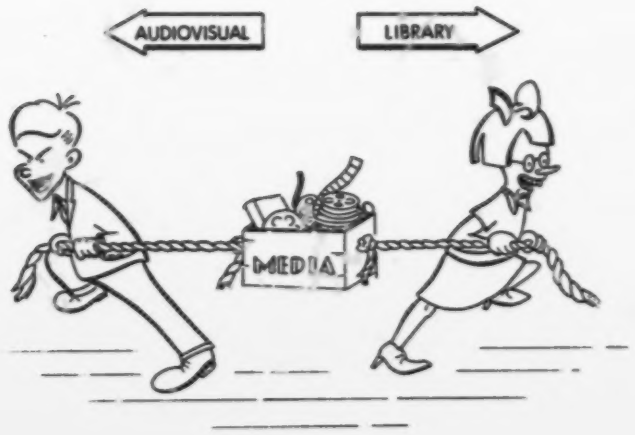


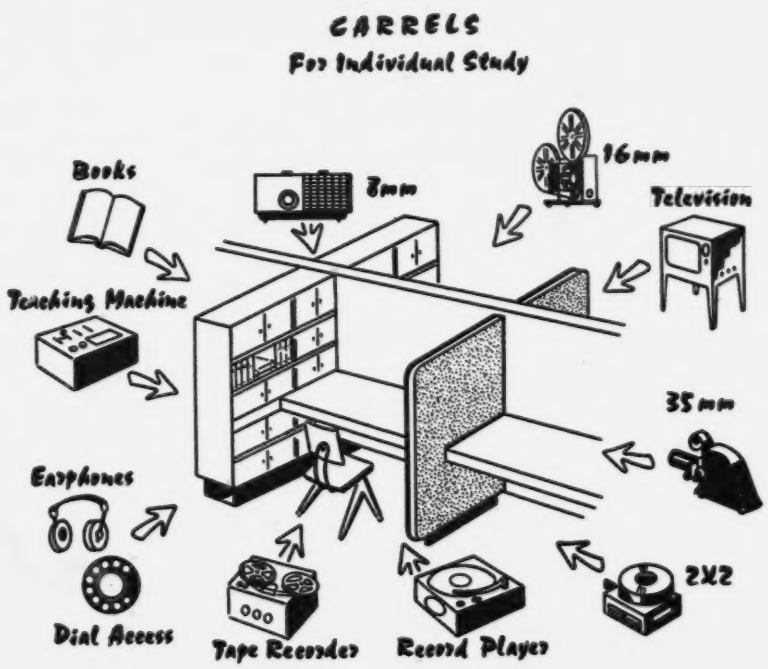
Whose Empire?

who is equally capable of dealing with and partial to all of the media and their utilization. We have been talking about this utopia for some years with very few operating examples to point to.

Maybe the time has come to try an entirely different approach. Franklin Roosevelt made history by proclaiming to divided labor, "A plague on both your houses." Maybe the traditional librarian and traditional audiovisual specialist should neither be combined nor preserved.

Let's go back to the essential process of education and assume that neither library nor audiovisual empire existed. What media support is needed if modern education is to be most effective?

We start with the curriculum which includes the total body of what the students need to know. The curriculum is fed into the teaching-learning experience by professional educators and, if they are successful, desirably changed or educated students result. We have learned much about improving the teaching-learning experience in recent years, and the schools are in ferment as new techniques with software and hardware are incorporated.



Much progress is made by dividing educational experience into group activities and individual learning.

The group of from twenty-five to hundreds is most efficient for the one-way communication of common instructional messages needed by all of the students at the same time. As modern communication devices and techniques are employed, the term "lecture" is inadequate and "presentation" is more descriptive. Special presentation areas are being constructed to make it easy to communicate, even with large members of students and a variety of media.

A group of about a dozen is most efficient for the essential interaction part of education where students are discussing, questioning, debating, proposing, etc. This is best done in special areas where students are seated around a table with some degree of privacy. Few, if any, media are used in this part of education.

Individual learning is growing rapidly as we discover that most students are ready, willing, and able to assume much responsibility for their own education. The materials available for individual study have never been so good, so abundant, and so needed. We can at last really do something about the unique needs of each individual student. Individual learning can take place in ordinary classrooms, study halls, libraries, and homes. It can be much more effective in individual study spaces called carrels which may be equipped with sophisticated hardware to permit the use of all kinds of newer media, as well as printed materials.

Group presentations and individual study both need hardware and software in order to be effective, and their acquisition, or production, storage, maintenance, cataloging, scheduling, operation, and evaluation become substantial operations. Let us consider three separate service areas.

We need a software or media library that includes all of the books (other than texts), films, slides, strips, recordings, etc., that will be needed in presentations and individual study. These materials need to be acquired, cataloged, stored, and maintained. Most of all, they need to be readily available to both teachers and students.

We need a hardware or equipment shop where projectors, previewers, recorders, amplifiers, etc., are acquired, stored, serviced, and ready for loan to a teacher or student to use in presentations or individual study.

We also need a local production center where recordings, brief movies, slides, transparencies, graphics, booklets, and hand-out sheets can be prepared to answer special needs for media that cannot be satisfied with commercial materials.

The software library can be operated by nonprofessional people who have been trained in the handling of media. A two-year library training program is the closest thing that presently exists.

The hardware within and outside of the shop can be best serviced and operated by trained technical personnel who have completed a two-year postsecondary technical program. Presently these men tend to have either electronic or photographic training. For our purposes, they need to have a combination of both.

The local production center needs a photographic, graphics, and audio person to operate cameras, duplicators, tape recorders, lettering and drawing devices, etc. A new two-year training program is needed for this person.

It appears so far that we have taken care of the whole library and audiovisual empires without having any need for professional personnel, other than the teachers. This is not the case.

We do need two new professional people who have not yet appeared on the scene in any appreciable numbers. We need a specialist in presentation design and techniques, and a specialist in individual study design and techniques.

The presentation specialist would know the contents and capabilities of the software, hardware, and production centers and be a cosupervisor of their personnel and activities. He would also know much about projection, lighting, acoustics, group dynamics, and sophisticated presentation techniques. He would be to the presentation what the producer is to a television show. He would work with many teachers to make the most effective presentations possible. He would work with administrators on the design of new presentation areas and with curriculum groups on the design of new courses. He would know how to evaluate the outcomes of group instruction.

The specialist in individual study would also know the contents and capabilities of the software, hardware, and production centers and be a cosupervisor of their personnel and activities. He would in addition be an expert in working with individual students as they search for, select, and use reference books, supplementary texts, films, recordings, slides, newspapers, periodicals, and especially programed materials. He would have particular competencies in choosing carrels and systems to go with them. He would be a sympathetic and patient helper to the student with a problem. He would do much of the evaluation of learning outcomes.

These two specialists and the three technical people might work in one large school or a number of smaller ones. They might need secretarial assistance. They would work on a team directly with the teachers and with each other so that every student could learn from all modern media, as well as the traditional ones.

Where would the specialists come from? Audiovisual people would most likely move into the presentation area as they learned about producing presentations, group dynamics, research design, room construction, etc. Librarians would most likely move into the individual study area as they learned about newer media used in individual study, carrels, evaluation, guidance, and particularly programed instruction. Graduate programs could be established for the future training of these new educational specialists.

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audiovisual instruction

"... to help improve instruction through the more effective use of materials."

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